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## **A Study on Importance of Women Participants in Higher Education: A Case Study of Karnataka, India**

By Prashanth Kumar C.P.<sup>1</sup> and Santhosh V.<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

Education is a fundamental human right and it is necessary, irrespective of gender, to achieve the goal of basic education for all. There is limited representation of women in many sectors of Indian society; however, women form a higher percentage of college professors in Karnataka. Women's support of one another plays an important role in higher education and they can balance both professional and personal life. Women enter the teaching profession because of the flexibility in time, which helps them manage both professional and personal lives simultaneously. Women are working in all the sectors, i.e., education, medical, engineering, transportation, etc., but they continue to face gender discrimination as most professions are dominated by men. Women have proven themselves to be mentally strong as they work hard and successfully manage both family life and professional space together. The present study focuses on the important role that women play in higher education, constraints faced by them in the teaching profession as well as problems faced while balancing professional and personal lives. For the survey, open-ended research questionnaires were framed. The study concludes that participation of women in higher education plays a vital role. The study suggests remedial measures to overcome constraints faced by females in the profession of teaching. Hence, the present paper focuses on the importance of women in higher education and what problems they are facing in higher education. It also throws light on the balance between personal and professional lives of women.

*Keywords:* Women, Teaching Fraternity, Higher education, Significance of edifications, Constraints and Problems.

### **Introduction**

One of the pioneers of women's education before India's independence was Savithribai Phule. India has historically viewed education as an important feature of continuous progress in the lives of her people. For a long time, Indian women were stuck in stereotypical roles within a household and followed a rigid traditional system as people gave more importance to the marriage of women. In the past few decades, socio-cultural changes have transformed the perception about the position of women in the society. Women are contributing to various fields such as education, agriculture, entertainment, sports, entrepreneurship and so on. Since

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independence, we have had examples of strong women in leadership positions also as Indira Gandhi, the first woman Prime Minister of India, excelled in politics. Apart from that, at present Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman plays an important role as the finance minister of India. The Indian universities have realized the important role of higher education in transforming women's role in the society and the University Grants Commission focuses more on strengthening of female andragogy through Indian universities.

Further, female enrollment in higher schooling since independence has increased to 42% (Gurudutta-Japee, 2019). India has the third largest (Reddy and Vaidyanathan, 2019) higher education system in the world, out of which 12% of the students belong to the age group of 18-24 years.

According to the data, in the year 2019, the total enrolment in higher coaching is more than 37 million students, which comprises of more than 19 million male students and more than 18 million female students. Therefore, female enrolment consists of 48.67% (News18, 2019). At present, education is directly related to empowerment. At the national level, the women literacy rate is 70.3% except Kerala. In Kerala, female literacy rate is at 96.2% (The Economic Times, 2020). In India, the women literacy rate is lesser than the male literacy rate due to gender-based discrimination. Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are best performing states as far as improving literacy rate is concerned while Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand states are the worst-performing states.

## **Review of Select Literature**

There are several studies that focus on the role of women in higher education and investigate the problems and constraints they face within the profession. We discuss some of the studies that we find particularly valuable. Gantaloo (2016) found that in India, women's education has played a vital role in the development of the family, society, and nation by helping to overcome gender discrimination. Her study investigated the role of women in higher education suggesting that women's education is the only way to create awareness and promote gender equality in society. Gender inequality can be reduced by providing equal job opportunities in every sector within equitable economic systems. She also found that some higher education institutions specifically recruited women to reduce gender inequality.

Nagaraja (2018) in his study, "Empowerment of Women through Higher Education", describes education as a necessary tool for empowering women. The study focused on education as an essential medium for women and young girls to build their lives under conditions of equality and equity. To improve women's access to education, the government of India has undertaken various strategies such as open and distance learning modes, providing skills-based education in engineering, offering scholarships to poor and meritorious students, creating hostel facilities for women as well as postdoctoral fellowship for women. Our findings suggest that the focus of policymakers should be to provide skill-based training to women, establish a number of institutions in remote areas and arrange bank loan facilities to make higher education studies accessible to those who have an aptitude for it.

McLendon (2018) focused on the perception of women administrators in higher education and their views regarding gender issues in leadership in higher education. The study suggests that women are comfortable in their positions and with their use of power. The study concluded that guidance and collaboration are important for women in higher education and administration to formulate strategies for further success.

## **Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the importance of women's role in higher education. It also delves into women's work-life balance. The outcome of the research will add to the body of knowledge which focuses on the factors that are important to enhance the happiness and success of women in teaching professions. The research results can also contribute to women's teaching fraternity by suggesting ways to strike a work-life balance.

## **Research Methodology**

### *Problems Statement*

Currently, women face various challenges in higher education. In private institutions, women face disparities in pay due to gender discrimination. It is difficult for women to balance both professional and personal lives at the same time because of inadequate social supports.

### *Research Design*

Factor Analysis, Chi-Square and ANOVA statistical tools are used for analysis. The present study aims to find the relationship between women in higher education, their work-life balance and problems faced by them in higher education.

### *Measures*

Importance of women in higher education, problems faced by women in their profession and balancing of personal and occupation concurrently.

### *Objectives of the study*

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- ◆ To know the importance of women in higher education.
- ◆ To study the problems faced by women in higher education.
- ◆ To analyze the work-life balance of women in higher education.

## **Hypothesis**

### *Null hypothesis*

- There is no significant relationship between women and higher education.
- There is no substantive association between women and higher education
- There is no serious tension between women in the balance of personal and professional life.

### *Alternative hypothesis*

- There is a notable interest of women towards higher education.
- There is a remarkable interrelationship between women's challenges and higher education.
- There is tension for women in finding a balance between personal and professional life.

## **Sample**

The present research focuses on the importance of women in higher education in Bangalore. The study involves understanding the importance of women in higher education, problems and constraints faced by them in higher education and their work-life balance. The sample size comprises of approximately 107 women who are working in higher education as faculty. The samples are selected randomly.

## **Tests/Tools**

Chi-square (Cronbach's Alpha Test), The Factor analysis, and One-Way ANOVA were used to assess the variables.

## **Procedure**

The data was collected from female faculty members in various institutions for the purpose of this research. The researchers prepared open-ended research questionnaires using google forms. The respondent's opinion was collected through research questionnaires. After primarily collecting the data, we conducted statistical analysis by applying appropriate statistical tools.

## **Statistical Analysis**

The following statistical tools were used for analyzing the data: Chi-Square statistics were used to determine the impact of women in higher education by applying Cronbach's Alpha test. Factor analysis was done by applying a rotated component matrix to know the representation of each component of how the variables are weighted for each factor. A one-way ANOVA was employed to compare two or more independent variables to determine whether there is any statistical evidence associated with population means.

## **Scope of the study**

Education is the most important tool for empowering women through knowledge, skills and self-confidence. It helps in reducing gender discrimination and also improves their status in the family and society. Women's education can have ripple effects within the family and across generations which will lead the path towards a progressive society.

## **Limitations**

1. The study considered the teaching fraternities of Bangalore city.
2. The study focuses only on the importance, problems and work-life balance of women in the teaching profession.
3. The survey was conducted only considering a few selected respondents due to time constraints.
4. Analysis was done only on the basis of the respondent's responses.
5. Only Chi-Square statistical technique was used for research analysis.

## Results and Discussion

The main findings of the present study are shown in tables below.

### Objective 1

**Table 1: Rotated Component Matrix**

| Particulars  | Components |   |   |   |      |   |   |
|--|------------|---|---|---|------|---|---|
|  | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5    | 6 | 7 |
| Women are more capable than men at managing team (collaborative) work efforts          | .456       |   |   |   |      |   |   |
| Women are supportive of other women in the profession                                  | .443       |   |   |   |      |   |   |
| Colleens are perceived (equal) to be as powerful on the job as men                     | .407       |   |   |   |      |   |   |
| Females are frequently perceived (Seen) is stereotyped (Fixed) roles                   | .447       |   |   |   |      |   |   |
| Women often lack freedom of geographic mobility which impedes their career advancement | .422       |   |   |   |      |   |   |
| Women are seeking administrative positions in higher education                         |            |   |   |   | .546 |   |   |

**Table-2: Chi-Square test**

| Factor-1 Importance of Women in Higher Education                                       | Factor Loading | Chi-Square Value | Degrees of Freedom | P Value (Asymp .sig) | Table Value @ 5% Significance Level on DOF | Remarks                               |
|--|----------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Women are seeking administrative positions in higher education                         | .861           | 116.018          | 3                  | .000                 | 7.815                                      | Status of (H0) Hypothesis is Rejected |
| Women are supportive of other women in the profession                                  | .803           | 150.165          | 4                  | .000                 | 9.488                                      |                                       |
| Women are perceived (equal) to be as powerful on the job as men                        | .639           | 250.477          | 3                  | .000                 | 7.815                                      |                                       |
| Women often lack freedom of geographic mobility which impedes their career advancement | .893           | 116.459          | 3                  | .000                 | 7.815                                      |                                       |
| Women are frequently perceived in stereotyped (fiixed) roles                           | .811           | 135.486          | 4                  | .000                 | 9.488                                      |                                       |
| Women are more capable than men at managing team (collaborative) work efforts          | .539           | 66.550           | 3                  | .000                 | 7.815                                      |                                       |

**Table 3: One Way ANOVA**

| <b>Particular</b>   | <b>Qualification</b> |                | <b>Designation</b> |                | <b>Experience</b> |                |
|---|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
|   | <b>F Value</b>       | <b>P Value</b> | <b>F Value</b>     | <b>P Value</b> | <b>F Value</b>    | <b>P Value</b> |
| Women are seeking administrative positions in higher education                        | 8.070                | .000           | 7.700              | .000           | 7.500             | .000           |
| Women are supportive of other women in the profession                                 | 6.403                | .000           | 6.994              | .000           | 5.490             | .000           |
| Women are perceived (Equal) to be as powerful on the job as men                       | 4.623                | .001           | 13.288             | .000           | 10.786            | .000           |
| Lass often lack freedom of geographic mobility which impedes their career advancement | 2.393                | .039           | .451               | .772           | 1.528             | .195           |
| Women are frequently perceived (Seen) in stereotyped (Fixed) roles                    | 2.256                | .050           | 4.478              | .002           | 1.836             | .123           |
| Women are more capable than men at managing team (collaborative) work efforts         | 4.653                | .000           | 4.004              | .004           | 1.773             | .135           |

| <b>Particular</b>  | <b>Income</b>  |                | <b>Institution</b> |                |
|--|----------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
|  | <b>F Value</b> | <b>P Value</b> | <b>F Value</b>     | <b>P Value</b> |
| Women are seeking administrative positions in higher education                         | 12.586         | .000           | 2.174              | .092           |
| Women are supportive of other women in the profession                                  | 2.742          | .044           | 8.628              | .000           |
| Women are perceived (Equal) to be as powerful on the job as men                        | 3.805          | .011           | .791               | .500           |
| Women often lack freedom of geographic mobility which impedes their career advancement | 4.613          | .004           | 1.366              | .254           |
| Women are frequently perceived in stereotyped (fixed) roles                            | 4.575          | .004           | 2.114              | .099           |
| Women are more capable than men at managing team (collaborative) work efforts          | 10.446         | .000           | 4.852              | .003           |

**Interpretation**

The chi-square value is more than the critical value at 5% (0.05) significance level, hence, it is proved that the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and alternate hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Qualification, Designation, Experience, Income and Institution are considered as the dependent variables and considered for factor loading. The F value is more than 1 and P-value is more than 0, wherein the null hypothesis will be rejected, and alternative hypothesis will be accepted.

Objective 2

**Table 1: Rotated Component Matrix**

| Particulars   | Components |      |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|------------|------|---|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1          | 2    | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Women are more sensitive to people matters than men.  |            | .558 |   |   |   |   |   |
| Females are not as effective in their decision-making as men                                | .607       |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Women are incapable of financial finesse  | .703       |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Lassies are lack in delegation skills   | .723       |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Females are more concerned on the job process rather than the end result                    | .638       |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Signoras are work harder than men for less money  |            | .509 |   |   |   |   |   |
| Women are not good mediators  | .683       |      |   |   |   |   |   |
| Innate gender differences account primarily for the ways men and women function on the job. | .701       |      |   |   |   |   |   |

**Table-2: Chi-Square test**

| Factor-2 Problems of Women in Higher Education   | Factor Loading | Chi-Square Value | Degree s of Freedom | P Value (Asym p.sig) | Table Value @ 5% Significance Level on DOF | Remarks                               |
|--|----------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Women are more sensitive to people matters than men  | .599           | 110.587          | 3                   | .000                 | 7.815                                      | Status of (H0) Hypothesis is Rejected |
| Women are not as effective in their decision-making as men                                 | .850           | 24.110           | 4                   | .000                 | 9.488                                      |                                       |
| Women are incapable of financial finesse   | .794           | 50.349           | 4                   | .000                 | 9.488                                      |                                       |
| Women lack in delegation skills  | .900           | 68.514           | 4                   | .000                 | 9.488                                      |                                       |
| Women are more concerned about the job process rather than the end result                  | .633           | 41.156           | 3                   | .000                 | 7.815                                      |                                       |
| Women work harder than men for less money  | .429           | 125.028          | 4                   | .000                 | 9.488                                      |                                       |
| Women are not good mediators   | .781           | 39.890           | 4                   | .000                 | 9.488                                      |                                       |
| Innate gender differences account primarily for the ways men and women function on the job | .577           | 41.159           | 3                   | .000                 | 7.815                                      |                                       |



**Table 3: One Way ANOVA**

| <b>Particular</b>  | <b>Qualification</b> |                | <b>Designation</b> |                | <b>Experience</b> |                |
|--|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
|  | <b>F Value</b>       | <b>P Value</b> | <b>F Value</b>     | <b>P Value</b> | <b>F Value</b>    | <b>P Value</b> |
| Women are more sensitive to people matters than men  | 8.223                | .000           | 10.858             | .000           | 13.706            | .000           |
| Women are not as effective in their decision-making as men                                 | 1.873                | .100           | 2.113              | .080           | 5.702             | .000           |
| Women are incapable of financial finesse   | 4.262                | .001           | .009               | 1.000          | 6.557             | .000           |
| Women lack in delegation skills  | 4.358                | .001           | 11.807             | .000           | 11.903            | .000           |
| Women are more concerned about the job process rather than the end result                  | 4.888                | .000           | 7.963              | .000           | 8.257             | .000           |
| Women work harder than men for less money  | 4.665                | .000           | 5.776              | .000           | .948              | .437           |
| Women are not good mediators   | 2.635                | .025           | 2.903              | .023           | 3.680             | .006           |
| Innate gender differences account primarily for the ways men and women function on the job | 6.567                | .000           | 3.665              | .007           | 13.661            | .000           |

| <b>Particular</b>   | <b>Income</b>  |                | <b>Institution</b> |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
|   | <b>F Value</b> | <b>P Value</b> | <b>F Value</b>     | <b>P Value</b> |
| Women are more sensitive to people matters than men.  | 2.776          | .042           | 26.022             | .000           |
| Women are not as effective in their decision-making as men                                  | 6.472          | .000           | 2.877              | .037           |
| Women are incapable of financial finesse  | 5.732          | .001           | 6.020              | .001           |
| Women lack in delegation skills   | 3.441          | .018           | 1.123              | .341           |
| Women are more concerned about the job process rather than the end result                   | 6.962          | .000           | 8.147              | .000           |
| Women work harder than men for less money   | 2.598          | .053           | 5.803              | .001           |
| Women are not good mediators  | 7.618          | .000           | 3.025              | .031           |
| Innate gender differences account primarily for the ways men and women function on the job. | .767           | .514           | 4.451              | .005           |

**Interpretation:** Chi- square value is more than the critical value at 5% (0.05) significance level, hence, it is proved that the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and alternate hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Qualification, Designation, Experience, Income and Institution are considered as the dependent variables and consider for factor loading. F value is more than 1 and P-value is more than 0, wherein the null hypothesis would be rejected, and alternative hypothesis would be accepted.

*Objective 3*

**Table 1: Rotated Component Matrix**

| Particulars   | Components |      |      |   |   |   |   |
|---|------------|------|------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1          | 2    | 3    | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Career-oriented women are frequently torn between family and work responsibilities  | .509       |      |      |   |   |   |   |
| Women are good managers of people and the tasks that need to be completed           |            |      | .792 |   |   |   |   |
| Women are good organizers and can keep their focus on what needs to be accomplished |            | .594 |      |   |   |   |   |
| Balancing of both professional and personal life simultaneously is difficult        | .616       |      |      |   |   |   |   |

**Table 2: Chi-Square test**

| Factor-3 Work- Life Balance of Women in Higher Education                            | Factor Loading | Chi-Square Value | Degrees of Freedom | P Value (Asym p.sig) | Table Value @ 5% Significance Level on DOF | Remarks                               |
|---|----------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Career-oriented women are frequently torn between family and work responsibilities  | .557           | 92.972           | 3                  | .000                 | 7.815                                      | Status of (H0) Hypothesis is Rejected |
| Women are good managers of people and the tasks that need to be completed           | .792           | 60.532           | 3                  | .000                 | 7.815                                      |                                       |
| Women are good organizers and can keep their focus on what needs to be accomplished | .707           | 121.303          | 3                  | .000                 | 7.815                                      |                                       |
| Balancing of both professional and personal life simultaneously is difficult        | .455           | 86.073           | 3                  | .000                 | 7.815                                      |                                       |

**Table 3: One Way ANOVA**

| <b>Particular</b>   | <b>Qualification</b> |                | <b>Designation</b> |                | <b>Experience</b> |                |
|---|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
|   | <b>F Value</b>       | <b>P Value</b> | <b>F Value</b>     | <b>P Value</b> | <b>F Value</b>    | <b>P Value</b> |
| Career-oriented women are frequently torn between family and work responsibilities  | 6.138                | .000           | 10.598             | .000           | 6.900             | .000           |
| Women are good managers of people and the tasks that need to be completed           | 3.384                | .006           | 9.981              | .000           | 6.571             | .000           |
| Women are good organizers and can keep their focus on what needs to be accomplished | 3.853                | .002           | 2.607              | .037           | 10.471            | .000           |
| Balancing of both professional and personal lives is difficult                      | 3.713                | .003           | 6.367              | .000           | 9.385             | .000           |
| <b>Particular</b>   | <b>Income</b>        |                | <b>Institution</b> |                |                   |                |
|   | <b>F Value</b>       | <b>P Value</b> | <b>F Value</b>     | <b>P Value</b> |                   |                |
| Career women are frequently torn between family and work responsibilities           | 2.350                | .073           | 1.528              | .208           |                   |                |
| Women are good managers of people and the tasks that need to be completed           | 5.534                | .001           | 4.655              | .004           |                   |                |
| Women are good organizers and can keep their focus on what needs to be accomplished | 3.572                | .015           | 6.333              | .000           |                   |                |
| Balancing of both professional and personal life is difficult                       | 19.627               | .000           | .310               | .818           |                   |                |

**Interpretation**

The chi-square value is more than the critical value at 5% (0.05) significance level; hence, it is proved that the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) is rejected and alternate hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) is accepted. Qualification, Designation, Experience, Income and Institutions are considered as the dependent variables and considered for factor loading. The F value is more than 1 and P-value is more than 0, wherein the null hypothesis would be rejected, and alternative hypothesis would be accepted.

**Findings**

1. A majority of the respondents hold post-graduate degrees and are working in the position of Assistant Professor in various institutions.
2. More than 50% of the respondents working in higher education have less than 5 years of experience.
3. A majority of the respondents were working in a private institution, and their salary was below 40000 INR.
4. More than 90% of women are seeking administrative work in their fields.
5. Women are supportive of other women in their work environment, and they are perceived as equal to men.

6. A majority of the respondents have perceived stereotypical notions in the workplace.
7. A majority of the respondents say that they are more capable than men in managing teamwork.
8. More than 70% of the respondents feel that they are more sensitive in matters which deal with the public than men.
9. Respondents strongly disagree about women not being as affective decision-makers as men.
10. Respondents disagreed about the incapability of financial finesse (manipulation), lack of delegation and women not being good mediators.
11. A majority of the respondents say that they are working harder than men for less pay.
12. Respondents agreed that they are good organizers and they manage both professional and personal lives simultaneously.
13. A majority of the respondents say that there are visible gender differences while on the job.

## **Conclusion**

Women play vital roles in various disciplines at the university, ranging from teaching to administration. Women have made their mark in all fields, and history bears witness to their remarkable journey. Through higher education, women contribute to the empowerment of themselves and other women.

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